

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8157

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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SUBJ: PEKING AND THE TAIWANESE

SUMMARY: APPARENTLY HOPING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DISARRAY IN TMG
TAIWANESE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT, DAMPEN INTEREST IN THE MOSCOW ALTER-
NATIVE, AND MINIMIZE OPPOSITION OF THE LOCAL POPULATION TO PEKING-
TAIPEI TALKS, THE PRC HAS BEGUN TO TAKE A CONCILIATORY APPROACH
TOWARD SUPPORTERS OF TAIWAN INDEPENDANCE. PROPAGANDA AIMED AT THE
TAIWANESE POPULATION IN GENERAL IS ALSO BECOMING LESS STRIDENT.
RECONCILIATION, FLEXIBILITY, PATRIOTISM AND INEVITABILITY ARE THE
MAJOR THEMES IN CHINA'S EFFORT TO CONDITION THE TAIWANESE TO ACCEPT
THE IDEA OF EVENTUAL "PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION." END SUMMARY

1. LAST YEAR IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH A GROUP OF CHINESE-
AMERICANS CHOU EN-LAI ADMITTED THE PRC'S RELATIVE IGNORANCE ABOUT
TAIWAN DEVELOPMENTS (1972 HONG KONG 6448). SINCE THAT TIME PEKING
HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL GROUPS OF NATIVE TAIWANESE VISITORS AND HAS
MADE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO LEARN FROM THEM AS WELL AS FROM VISITING
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CHINESE-AMERICANS ABOUT CONDITIONS AND ATTITUDES IN TAIWAN. WHILE
STILL PROFESSING THE NEED TO LEARN MORE, PEKING APPEARS TO HAVE
DEVELOPED A MORE SOPHISTICATED VIEW OF POLITICAL DYNAMICS ON THE
ISLAND, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NATIVE

TAIWANESE AND MAINLANDERS. WHILE CONTINUING ITS POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CAMPAIGNS DIRECTED AT THE LATTER GROUP, THE PRC IS NOW GIVING MORE ATTENTION TO APPEALS TO THE TAIWANESE.

2. BEFORE THE SHANGHAI AND THE CHOU-TANAKA COMMUNIQUE OF 1972, THE PRC, IN ORDER TO UNDERScore THE COMPLETE UNACCEPTABILITY FROM ITS POINT OF VIEW OF TAIWAN'S INDEPENDENCE, VIGOROUSLY DENOUNCED ADVOCATES OF THE INDEPENDENCE LINE AS TRAITORS. WITH THE CHANCES NOW MUCH REDUCED OF EITHER THE US OR JAPAN PROMOTING TAIWANESE INDEPENDENCE, THE INVOLVEMENT IS IN A STATE OF DISARRAY AND THE POTENTIAL

FOR SOVIET INVOLVEMENT HAS BECOME THE PRINCIPAL CHINESE CONCERN. IN ORDER TO EXPLOIT THE DISARRAY AS WELL AS TO DAMPEN INTEREST BY THE TAIWANESE IN MOSCOW OVERTURES, PEKING IS NOW TAKING A CONCILIATORY LINE TOWARD INDEPENDENCE ADHERENTS SIMILAR TO ITS FORGIVING ATTITUDE TOWARD KMT SUPPORTERS.

3. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR PEKING SPOKESMEN HAVE BEGUN TO EXPRESS UNDERSTANDING OF THE SENTIMENT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND TO DESCRIBE IT AS SIMPLY MISGUIDED. THIS FEBRUARY, PEKING FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1965 COMMEMORATED THE 1947 UPRISING OF TAIWANESE AGAINST THE KMT, NOTING THAT THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AT THAT TIME HAD SUPPORTED THE TAIWANESE. TWO TAIWANESE SPEAKERS ON THE RECENT OCCASION IN PEKING REFERRED TO "THOSE KINDHEARTED PEOPLE WHO MISTAKENLY THINK THAT INDEPENDENCE OF TAIWAN MAY FREE THEM EXTERNALLY FROM AGGRESSION BY BIG POWERS AND MAY OVERTHROW THE DICTATORIAL RULE." (HONG KONG 2121).

4. PRC OFFICIALS HAVE SHOWN A KEEN INTEREST IN LEARNING ABOUT INDEPENDENCE LEADERS IN JAPAN AND THE US IN MAY, CHOU PERSONALLY RECEIVED AN ARDENT TAIWANESE INDEPENDENCE FIGURE RESIDENT IN THE US WHO HAS CONNECTIONS WITH THE WELL-KNOWN TAIWANESE NATIONALIST, PENG MING-MIN. CHOU ASSURED HIS VISITOR THAT TAIWANESE MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN PROBLEM, AND HE PROMISED THAT THE PRC WOULD DO NOTHING TO ADD TO THE SUFFERING OF THE TAIWANESE, CHOU ALSO STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT TAIWAN'S FUTURE HAPPINESS AND SECURITY LAY IN ITS INCORPORATION INTO THE PRC.
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TM IT IS CLEAR THAT PEKING SEES THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY OF US AND JAPAN-RESIDENT TAIWANESE AS AN IMPORTANT GROUP THROUGH WHICH IT HOPES TO INFLUENCE OPINIONS ON TAIWAN ABOUT THE PRC. CHOU, FOR EXAMPLE, RECENTLY OFFERED TO SUNSIDIZE THE TRAVEL EXPENSES OF TAIWANESE STUDENTS IN THE US WHO WISH TO VISIT CHINA. LIAO CHENG-CHIH ALSO PAID SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE OVERSEAS CHINESE COMMUNITY (LARGELY TAIWANESE) IN JAPAN DURING HIS VISIT THERE IN APRIL, AND A "TAIWAN" PROVINCIAL PING PONG TEAM FROM JAPAN IS TO PARTICIPATE IN A TOURNAMENT THIS MONTH IN PEKING. WITHIN THE PAST YEAR THE TWO MAJOR PRC OWNED HONG KONG NEWSPAPERS HAVE WITH INCREASING REGULARITY DEVOTED A PAGE EACH WEEK TO "NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS ABOUT TAIWAN." THESE REPORTS WHICH GIVE RATHER STRAIGHTFORWARD ACCOUNTS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS ON THE ISLAND ARE PRESUMABLY AIMED PRIMARILY AT

TAIWANESE AND OTHER CHINESE OVERSEAS.

6. RADIO PEKING PROGRAMS DIRECTED AT BOTH TAIWANESE AND MAINLANDERS ON TAIWAN ALSO SEEM TO BE LESS STRIDENT THAN BEFORE. THE BROADCAST OF A LOW-KEYED LETTER TO TAIWAN GOVERNOR HSIEH TUNG-MIN FROM AN "OLD FRIEND" IS ONE RECENT EXAMPLE (HONG KONG 7206). CURRENT STATEMENTS AND INTERVIEWS BY YEH CHIEN-YING, FU TSO-YI AND OTHER CHINESE SPOKESMEN NOW STRESS "PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION" AND FLEXIBILITY ON HOW THIS IS TO BE CARRIED OUT. FU, A FORMER KMT GENERAL, HAS MADE A SPECIAL POINT OF EMPHASIZING THE INEVITABILITY OF REUNIFICATION AND OF THE EROSION OF TAIWAN'S BARGAINING POWER IN THE PROCESS--A MESSAGE INTENDED FOR BOTH TAIWANESE AND MAINLANDERS.

7. PEKING MUST PERFORCE CENTER ITS APPEAL TO TAIWANESE AS WELL AS MAINLANDERS ON CHINESE NATIONALISM-- A SENTIMENT WHICH FOR THE LAST 24 YEARS OR MORE THE KMT HAS DILIGENTLY TRIED TO INCULCATE IN THE NATIVE PROVINCIALS. TO BLACKEN THE IDEA OF MOSCOW AS AN ALTERNATIVE, RADIO BROADCASTS TO TAIWAN HAVE HIGHLIGHTED SOVIET "EXPANSIONIST AMBITIONS TOWARD THE MOTHERLAND (EG FUKIEN FRONT RADIO 11 GMT JULY 31). (FU TSO-YI HAS ALSO MAINTAINED THAT IN ANY EVENT THE US WOULD NOT PERMIT A SOVIET-TAIWAN DEAL). IN ITS APPEAL TO PATRIOTIC EMOTIONS, PEKING HAS PLAYED UP THE INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE OF THE PRC AS COMPARED TO THE "PITIFUL" ISOLATION OF THE ROC. THE PRC PROBABLY EXPECTS THAT ITS WORLD POSITION TOGETHER WITH ITS NUCLEAR AND SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENTS WILL COMPENSATE--PARTICULARLY IN THE THINKING OF TAIWANESE YOUTH--FOR ITS DISADVANTAGE IN THE COMPARISON OF STANDARDS OF LIVING.
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8. NOT WISHING TO GIVE AWAY ANYTHING BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS, PEKING OFFICIALS HAVE NATURALLY BEEN VAGUE IN DISCUSSING THE CONDITIONS OF REUNIFICATION. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH VISITING CHINESE-AMERICANS AND TAIWANESE, THE CHINESE HAVE CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO BE PINNED DOWN ON THIS SUBJECT. LAST YEAR IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION ABOUT TAIWAN, CHOU EN-LAI FREQUENTLY EMPLOYED THE TERM "AUTONOMY" (HONG KONG 6448). BUT SINCE THAT TIME CHOU AND OTHER CHINESE OFFICIALS SUCH AS VICE FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO KUAN-HUA (HONG KONG 7682) HAVE AVOIDED THE TERM AND INSTEAD HAVE FOCUSED ON CHINA'S VAGUE PLEDGE TO PROTECT EVEN THE INTERESTS OF TAIWAN CAPITALISTS AND TO MAINTAIN THE ISLAND STANDARD OF LIVING.

9. THIS IS OF COURSE AN ACADEMIC QUESTION FOR THE TIME BEING AS THE PRC ITSELF CONTINUES TO TAKE A LONG-TERM VIEW OF ACTUAL REUNIFICATION. CHOU HAS SAID THAT HE DOES NOT EXPECT TO SEE IT OCCUR IN HIS LIFETIME OR FOR AT LEAST TEN YEARS (1972 HONG KONG 6448). THE PRC IS STRESSING SIMPLY THE NEED FOR UNCONDITIONAL TALKS OR CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES AS THE FIRST STEP IN THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM. THE PRC'S CONCRETE OBJECTIVE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE APPEARS TO BE TO WIN A REAFFIRMATION BY THE PRC OF THE CHINESE OF TAIWAN AND OF EVENTUAL REUNIFICATION. PEKING THEREFORE PROBABLY ENTERTAINS NO GRANDIOSE HOPES IN REGARD TO WINNING OVER THE TAIWANESE POPULATION. RATHER ITS AIM IS TO DAMPEN FURTHER

THE INDEPENDANCE MOVEMENT, TO DISCOURAGE INTEREST IN THE SOVIET
OPTION, AND TO REDUCE LOCAL OPPOSITION TO PEKING-TAIPEI CONTACTS.
THE CHINESE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS BY CONDITIONING THE
NATIVE TAIWANESE TO ACCEPT BOTH THE INEVITABILITY OF REUNIFICATION
AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME NOT-TOO DISAGREEABLE FUTURE ACCOMMO-
DATION.
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